Chronicles a Targum.

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THE relation of Chronicles to the earlier historical books of the Old Testament has been described at different times in different ways. In the second and first century B.C., Chronicles was regarded by the Septuagint as a supplement (Παραλειπόμενα), while of late the tendency has rather been to call the work a Midrash or Haggadic commentary.

Yet, after all, the title which suits it best as a whole is that of *Targum*, for thereby the truth contained in the two views just mentioned is not denied (for a Targum often contains both supplementary information and also an Haggadic element), and also attention is called to the fact that Chronicles constantly reproduces the text of the earlier books, both paraphrasing and annotating it.

Thus we find (*a*) simple substitution in Chronicles of a common or later word for a rare or earlier word in Samuel or Kings, (*b*) additional or corrective details giving in Chronicles a more definite turn (or sometimes a *different* turn) to the old narrative, (*c*) touches in Chronicles which adapt the language of Samuel or Kings to the religious phraseology of the Chronicler's own day, (*d*) short alternative statements placed by the side of the statements of the earlier books, somewhat in the way in which the rival traditions of Rabbi Judah and of the Rabbinic majority are given in the Mishna, with the difference that in Chronicles alternative authorities are neither mentioned nor named.

(*a*) The following are instances of the substitution in Chronicles of an explanatory word or phrase for the word found in the earlier document:—

'body'=*guphah*	'body'=*gviyyah*
1 Chron. x. 12.	1 Sam. xxxi. 10.
(later word)	

'go forth to war'	'bestir thyself'
1 Chron. xiv. 15.	2 Sam. v. 24.

'Holy of Holies'	'oracle, shrine'
2 Chron. iii. 8.	1 Kings vi. 5.

(*b*) The additional or corrective details given in Chronicles are so numerous that the difficulty is not to find them but to classify them when found.

In the first place many of these additions of the Chronicler definitely assert (where Samuel and Kings leave it vague) that such and such a 'good' king observed such and such an injunction of the Mosaic law.

1 Chron. xiv. 12.	2 Sam. v. 21.
'And [the Philistines] left their gods there, and David gave commandment, and they were *burned with fire*.' (*Cp.* Deut. vii. 5.)	'And [the Philistines] left their images there, and David and his men *took them away*.'

1 Chron. xv. 1–15.	2 Sam. vi. 12–17.
It is definitely asserted that the Levites carried the ark [from the house of Obed-edom] upon their shoulders according to the law of Moses. (*Cp.* Ex. xxv. 13, 14.)	Mention is made of the 'bearers' (נשאי) of the ark (not of the use of a 'new cart' as ver. 3), but it is not said who these bearers were.

1 Chron. xxi. 6.	2 Sam. xxiv. 8.
Levi excluded from David's numbering. (*Cp.* Num. i. 49.)	'When they had gone *to and fro through all the land,* they returned to Jerusalem.' No hint is given that the numbering did not include all the tribes.

1 Chron. xxvii. 23.	2 Sam. xxiv. 9
David did not number them that were from twenty years old and under. (*Cp.* Num. i. 3.)	says more vaguely that the men *drawing sword* were numbered.

2 Chron. viii. 12, 13.	1 Kings ix. 25.
'Solomon offered . . . offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, three times in the year, even in the feast of unleavened bread and in the feast of weeks and in the feast of tabernacles.' (*Cp.* Deut. xvi. 16.)	'Three times in a year did Solomon offer burnt offerings and peace offerings upon the altar which he built unto the Lord.' There is nothing in the account in Kings to enable us to identify the three occasions.

2 Chron. vi. 12, 13.	1 Kings viii. 22
'And he (Solomon) stood before the altar of the Lord . ... (For Solomon had made a brazen scaffold—כיור—and upon it he stood.')	contains no mention of the brazen scaffold. The Chronicler perhaps wishes to caution his readers against supposing that Solomon after the Temple was finished 'went up upon' the altar itself, as one of the Aaronic priesthood might go up.

We next find in Chronicles certain corrections of the language of the earlier documents, by which references to the existence of practices not allowed by the Mosaic law are removed. Such corrections are not made with perfect consistency; e.g. in 2 Chron. i. 6 it is said (in agreement with 1 Kings iii. 4) that Solomon offered a thousand burnt-offerings at Gibeon, though by the Mosaic law no provision is made for the exercise of priestly functions by the king. Nevertheless the number of corrections is considerable.

1 Chron. xvi. 1.	2 Sam. vi. 17b.
'*They* (i.e. *the priests for David*) offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings.'	'*David* offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings.'

1 Chron. xviii. 17b.	2 Sam. viii. 18b.
'And the sons of David were the chief in attendance on the king.' (*Cp.* Num. xvi. 40.)	'And the sons of David were *priests*.'

(c) Changes introduced by the Chronicler into the *language* of the earlier documents often go beyond a mere change in religious phraseology and might therefore be cited elsewhere. A few instances may, however, be given here.

The best known is the frequent substitution of Elohim ('God'), for Jehovah ('The Lord'). The substitution is by no means universal, but it occurs so frequently that it is unnecessary to give references. (In the Chronicler's own narratives, *i.e.* those peculiar to him, the name Jehovah is frequently avoided, *e.g.* 2 Chron. xvii. 4, 'He sought to [ ] the God of his fathers,' 2 Chron. xx. 12, 'O [ ] our God, wilt thou not judge them?' *ib.* ver. 30, '[ ] his God gave him rest round about.')

Another change frequently but not universally made by the Chronicler is that of 'oracle' (shrine) into 'most holy place' (Holy of Holies).

It is not without significance as a point of language that David is mentioned, once and again with the epithet 'the man of God' (2 Chron. viii. 14. So Neh. xii. 36). David the king is becoming David the prophet.

Similarly the Chronicler lays stress on the theocratic nature of the kingdom of Israel by making David speak of his own throne as 'the throne of the kingdom of the Lord' (1 Chron. xxviii. 5), and even of 'the throne of the Lord' (1 Chron. xxix. 23).

An interesting instance of a Targum-like exposition of everyday language in a religious sense is offered by 1 Chron. xv. 26 (= 2 Sam. vi. 13) :—

1 Chron. xv. 26.	2 Sam. vi. 13.
'And it came to pass, when God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord that they offered seven bullocks and seven rams.'	'And it came to pass, when they that bare the ark of the Lord had gone six paces that he offered an ox and a fatling.'

In the above passage we have four significant variations of language. In the first place, the Chronicler specially names the Levites as the bearers of the ark; secondly, he interprets in words the thought which the writer of Samuel probably had in his mind in writing the words, 'when the bearers had gone six paces'; thirdly, following some different tradition or making some calculation from data unknown to us, he describes two sevenfold sacrifices in the place of two single ones; fourthly, by changing 'he offered' into 'they offered' he avoids giving any impression that David himself acted as a priest on this occasion. But the main point to which the Chronicler calls our attention is that the six safe paces of the bearers were a sign that God approved their journey and co-operated with them.

Another alteration of language, due this time to a religious standpoint somewhat different from that of the author (or continuator) of Samuel, is seen in the following passage :—

1 Chron. xxi. 1.	2 Sam. xxiv. 1.
'And Satan stood (continued to stand) against Israel, and he moved David to number Israel.'	'And the anger of the Lord burnt again against Israel, and he moved David against them, saying Go, number Israel and Judah.'

There is a certain crudeness in the language of Samuel which the Chronicler no doubt felt. No reason is given (contrast 2 Sam. xxi. 1), for the anger of the Lord, and (apparently) the Lord himself is represented as moving David to the commission of an act which met with a speedy punishment. The Chronicler's language, on the other hand, proceeds from a different sphere of thought. We are reminded of post-exilic literature, of Satan standing at the right hand of Joshua the high priest to be his adversary (Zech. iii. 1), or moving God to destroy the righteous without cause (Job ii. 3).

(*d*) Short alternative statements are found side by side or at a short distance from one another both in Samuel and Kings. They are explained in these books by the theory of the combination of two or more narratives by a compiler who did not attempt to smooth down all discordant details. A similar theory will explain similar phenomena in the Books of Chronicles. It is unreasonable to assert that the Chronicler had practically no other documents before him besides our Books of Samuel and Kings.

A good instance of alternative statements presented within a single verse is found in 1 Chron. xv. 27.

'And David was clothed with a robe (*m'il*) of fine linen . . . and David had upon him an ephod of linen.'

It should be said at once that the two statements of this verse do not by any means necessarily exclude one another. The high priest (Ex. xxviii. 4) was to wear both an ephod and a robe (*m'il*). The special garment, however, of the priest was the ephod, and this (according to 2 Sam. vi. 14 = 1 Chron. xv. 27*b*) David actually wore. Such a statement, however, does not agree well with the views of the history taken by the Chronicler, and the statement that David was clothed with a 'robe' (not necessarily a priestly garment) looks in its isolation most like an alternative tradition which seemed to the Chronicler more probable. Kittel (*Book of Chronicles*, Critical Edition, 1895) takes ver. 27*b* as a late edition to the text, but, as other similar instances of the incorporation of alternative statements can be produced, it is unnecessary to suppose an interpolation.

In 2 Chron. xiv. 5 (ver. 4, Heb.) we read, 'And he (Asa king of Judah) took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places . . .'

We find also the following :—

2 Chron. xv. 17.	1 Kings xv. 14
' But the high places were not taken away *out of Israel:* nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days.'	' But the high places were not taken away : nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect *with the Lord* all his days.'

Here again the Chronicler gives two varying traditions, only he harmonises them [1] by making the second refer to the northern kingdom. The silence of Kings, however, and the context of the passage are against the proposed reconciliation. The first tradition of the Chronicler may be based on a clearance of high places devoted to foreign deities, which may have accompanied the destruction of Maachah's image (2 Chron. xv. 16 = 1 Kings xv. 13).

The omission of the words ' with the Lord ' after the statement 'the heart of Asa was perfect ' may also be an harmonistic touch to cover such lapses from faith in Jehovah as the appeal for the help of Ben-hadad of Syria against Israel, and for the help of ' physicians ' in his last illness.

Again, we have—

2 Chron. xviii. 31, 32.	1 Kings xxii. 32, 33.
'[The captains of the chariots] turned about to fight against him : and Jehoshaphat cried out, [1] and the Lord helped him, and God moved them to depart from him. . . . [2]When the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel they turned back from pursuing him.'	'[The captains of the chariots] departed to fight against him : and Jehoshaphat cried out. . . . When the captains of the chariots saw that it was· not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.'

In the above instance the two traditions marked (1), (2) are not absolutely mutually exclusive, but taken in their obvious sense they give two alternative views of the cause of Jehoshaphat's escape. According to (1) the Syrians retired through some divine prompting, according to (2) through fear of disobeying the positive orders of their king.

It is, on the other hand, possible that the Chronicler, explaining the explanation already given in Kings, means that the Syrians turned

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[1] Unless ' Israel '=Judah (*cp*. 2 Chron. xii. 6, xxviii. 19).

back from Jehoshaphat because God brought to their remembrance the command of their king to fight with Ahab only. The order of the clauses, however, is against this view, for a further explanation should follow, not precede, the original one.

We can, it seems, trace still further this practice of the Chronicler of giving alternative traditions. Sometimes the tradition given in the earlier books of history is omitted altogether, being probably assumed to be known to the reader, and the alternative tradition only is given in Chronicles. Two important instances are the accounts of the deaths of Ahaziah and of Josiah.

The death of Ahaziah is thus given :—

2 Chron. xxii. 9.	2 Kings ix. 27.
'And he (Jehu) sought Ahaziah : and they caught him, (for he was hid in Samaria) and they brought him to Jehu, and slew him and buried him.'	'And Jehu followed after him (Ahaziah), and said, 'Smite him also in the chariot,' at the ascent of Gur which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo and died there. And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem.' . . .

It is possible that in this place of Chronicles 'Samaria' is to be understood in a wide sense, i.e. as meaning the territory of the Northern tribes, but no complete harmonisation of the two accounts can do justice to the language of both of them. According to Kings, Ahaziah escaped (for the moment) wounded from Jehu and died of his wounds; according to Chronicles he was brought to Jehu and slain.

The account of the death of Josiah shows a somewhat similar variation :—

2 Chron. xxxv. 20-24.	2 Kings xxiii. 29.
'Josiah went out to meet him (Neco) . . . and he disguised himself . . . and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo. And the archers shot at king Josiah, and the king said . . . I am sore wounded. And [his servants] brought him to Jerusalem, and he died.'	'King Josiah went to meet him (Neco). and he slew him at Meggido when he saw him.'

We have again a meagre account to compare with a fuller one, and at first sight it may seem

that we have only to fill in the account in Kings to bring about a harmonisation.

On looking carefully, however, at the language of the earlier work, a total absence of any reference to fighting or to an intention of fighting on the part of Josiah forces itself on the reader. Josiah 'went to meet Neco' as any little king might go to meet and do homage to a great king (cp. 2 Kings xvi. 10, 'Ahaz went to meet Tiglathpileser'). Neco at the first audience ('when he saw him') had him put to death, preferring to set up a creature of his own. 'The battle of Megiddo' is the alternative tradition preserved by the Chronicler only.

Other apparent instances of alternative traditions may be due to variation of reading or editorial correction only. An instance of this kind is the following :—

1 Chron. xx. 5.	2 Sam. xxi. 19.
'Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.'	'Elhanan the son of Jaare of the weavers the Bethlehemite slew Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.'

At first sight we seem to have two different traditions, one saying that Elhanan slew Goliath's brother, the other that he slew Goliath himself.

But it is more probable that we have here an editorial correction, based possibly on a previous corruption in the text as given in Samuel. If once, בית הלחמי was miswritten את הלחמי, it might appear to an editor a simple necessity to write אֵת גלית for אֲחִי גלית. The object of the correction would of course be to avoid the apparent contradiction with 1 Sam. xvii. 51 (where it said that [Goliath] was slain by *David*) which 2 Sam. xxi. 19 leaves unexplained. Yet probably no real contradiction exists.

A consideration of verses 4 and 23, the only places in which the word 'Goliath' occurs in 1 Sam. xvii., together with the fact that the champion is usually called simply 'the Philistine,' makes it probable that 'Goliath' is not a proper name at all, but merely the equivalent in the Philistine language for 'champion,' and that for 'Goliath the Gittite' we should write 'the Gittite champion' in 1 Sam. xxi. 9, and in 2 Sam. xxi. 19.